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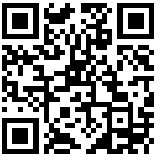

YOUTH POINTS THE WAY

DOUGLAS FAIRBANKS

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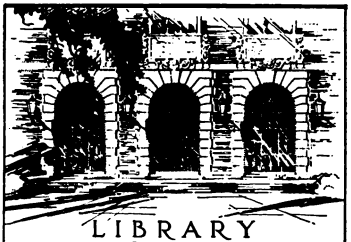

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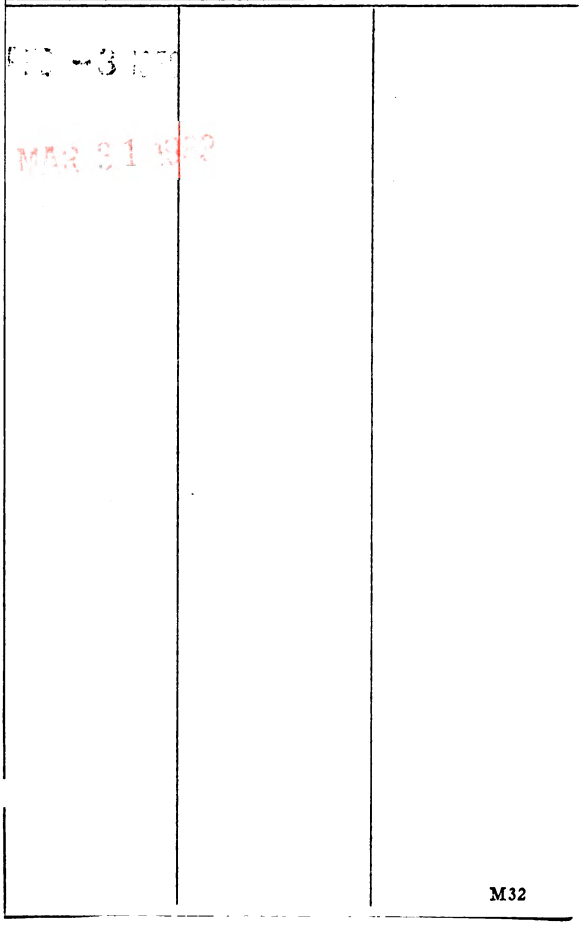

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YOUTH POINTS THE WAY

BY

DOUGLAS FAIRBANKS

WITH A PREFACE BY

JAMES E. WEST

CHIEF SCOUT EXECUTIVE
BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA

D. APPLETON AND COMPANY
NEW YORK :: 1924 :: LONDON

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INTRODUCTION

Douglas Fairbanks is one of our national characters. Of the people best known in this country he would probably be among the first six; of the most popular Americans known in foreign countries he is likely to be among the first three. Indeed, his is a reputation that has penetrated into strange places in far-away corners of the world where America is known simply as a distant country, and everything about it is a sealed book read only in the universal language of the screen.

The moving picture, which is something comparatively new, has already made vast changes in our organized life, and, without it, popularity such as Douglas Fairbanks

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enjoys would not be possible. The screen enlarges the field that once belonged to the traveling story-teller, but the secret of "Doug's" success was known to the first troubadour who spun a story for the entertainment of a gaping audience. He appeals to the eternal boy in us, the stunt-loving, swashbuckling, romantic boy in us, and screen language is as easily understood in America as it is in Turkey or among the Malays of Borneo, where the sub-title is spoken by a man who stands by the screen.

What forgotten dreams of our youth, drilled out of us by years of "grown-up" endeavors, are called out by D'Artagnan and the Three Musketeers, by Robin Hood, by the Thief of Bagdad and the Arabian Nights Entertainments? The leaping, somersaulting, climbing "Doug" is infectious. I am no longer in my mad youth, but com-

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ing out after seeing "Robin Hood," the stunt-centers in me were a-itch, and it required all the restraining influences of the lighted streets, the people passing to and fro, and the other tokens of a sane and orderly world to keep me from at least scaling a wall.

If Douglas Fairbanks can talk to the mature in language as intimate—and I use the word as connoting something that lies deep in us—think with what appeal he speaks to boys, to those youngsters of ours from whom the energy floods, as over a dam, seeking an outlet! The Douglas Fairbanks of the screen talks to them in a voice as authentic as their own, and the appeal is as healthy as it is interesting.

It is because of this that I am somewhat proud of having induced Douglas Fairbanks to write *Youth Points the Way* for *Boys' Life,* the magazine published by the Boy Scouts of America, of which I am

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editor-in-chief. This work was not only extremely popular, but, judging from the evidence we have had, was found by boys all over the country of practical helpfulness to them. *Youth Points the Way* has two great virtues: it is readable, and carries Douglas Fairbanks' personality. It would not require a very acute critic to discover the author if it had been issued anonymously.

The pages are full of his personality, but they are more than that: they give you a key not only to the boy in the man, but the man in the boy, the man who is doing so much to adapt the classic and preserve its charm through the moving picture. It is a success for which he deserves every praise.

In this book he makes no attempt to preach. Instead he talks in a friendly fellow-to-fellow way about such things as success, keeping fit, tolerance, on making a

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start, on advancing, on the inspiration of a sunrise. He illustrates them from his own experience in a way which gives his words more force than any other method could succeed in doing—for the virtue of words is only as they interpret the one who uses them.

It is a straightforward, manly message of a fighter who finds joy in overcoming obstacles rather than in the accomplishment; of one who finds a keen delight in physical well-being; of stunts on the rings and horizontal bars of a gymnasium; of racing his horses up a hill to watch the sunrise; of adventuring youth that took his first sightseeing trip on a cattle boat; of a purposeful worker building on the best there is in him.

I have been happy to coöperate in developing plans whereby this material can be made available to a larger number of

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boys and I earnestly recommend this little book to parents and friends of boys as well as to boys themselves as not only worthwhile but extremely interesting.

JAMES E. WEST
Chief Scout Executive
Boy Scouts of America

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YOUTH POINTS THE WAY

CHAPTER I

ENTHUSIASM AND OBSTACLES

ONCE upon a time many years ago (this is not a fairy tale) a man came to call upon me when I was busy at the telephone. When I had finished telephoning, he called my attention to some words which I had scrawled absent-mindedly upon a pad while the conscious part of my mind had been occupied with talking and listening. You will find that most people have this same habit of making marks of some kind on a piece of paper, provided one is handy,

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when they are telephoning. Sometimes these marks are undecipherable. Sometimes they resolve themselves into strange designs like enlarged fingerprints. I knew one man who always composed bars of music while he telephoned, reflecting, perhaps, some haunting melody that was dancing about in the back part of his mind.

The word which I had written over and over again until it sprawled over the entire page was SUCCESS. Now this struck my visitor as such an odd characteristic that he told other people about it and it got into the newspapers. The result was that many people seemed to think that I must be a sort of authority on success, since even my subconscious mind was always dwelling on it, and whenever I am asked to speak or write about anything, in the majority of cases it is on the subject of success. Just as if I had discovered some magic secret about it

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which would act as a talisman for other people if I handed it over to them! I wish I had, for it would have made life much easier for me. But I am afraid there is no such magic secret.

If there is such a thing, I am sure it is more in the possession of youth than maturity. And sometimes the odd thought occurs to me that instead of having age instruct youth on how to succeed, it ought to be the other way about and middle age should be humbly asking youth for the secret, for it is one that seems to be lost and forgotten as the years go by. If you don't understand me now, you will as I go on, for I am going to tell you as well as I can what I think is the great underlying principle of success.

Let us see what the ordinary rules of success are: clean and regular living, steady application and industry, a consecration of

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all our energies to our main purpose and the sacrifice of less important things that conflict with it—above all, hard work and perseverance. This or something like it you must have heard or read a hundred times. Now this is all right. I do not believe that real success has often been achieved without regard for these rules. One of the illusions not only of youth but of maturity is that there is some way of cheating these rules and discovering prosperity and happiness by some pleasant short cut, thereby dodging all the drudgery and hard work to which other people have stupidly committed themselves. But there isn't.

As I say, these instructions are very fine and all that, but I do not believe they go far enough. For the truth is that, although you will not discover success if you do not follow them, you are not by any means sure to discover it if you do. This seems to

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argue that they lack something. I believe they lack the greatest thing of all. The reason why this thing is so seldom mentioned among the items of advice on success is that it is hard to put into words. It is like many feelings that mean so much to you when they are stirring in the mind and so little when you try to express them to other people.

Let us put it in this way. You may have all the machinery of success before you, but unless you have sufficient motive power behind it, it won't run. It needs electricity—or, since electricity is seldom applied to human nature, let us say, for lack of a better word, "enthusiasm." Without this you will have a piece of very fine but quite lifeless machinery with nothing to turn the wheels.

I don't mean the kind of enthusiasm that cheers loudly at football games. I don't mean the kind of enthusiasm that makes

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New Year's resolutions. I mean the kind that keeps New Year's resolutions when they are once made. And you must admit there is a great difference. It is that unconquerable spirit of enterprise that laughs at reverses, knowing that they are part of the game, takes obstacles as something to whet the appetite for further endeavor, and fights for what it wants for the pure joy of fighting. It is the great desire that nothing can defeat. If you have this, you can put all the rules for success in the wastebasket and forget them, for they will take care of themselves.

Perhaps now you will understand what I meant when I said that youth was more in possession of the magic secret of success than age. For the spirit of enthusiasm is the special property of youth. Older people often find it deserting them and they are forever trying to recapture it, for you

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seldom appreciate the real value of a thing until it shows signs of escaping from you. Your problem will be to retain this spirit of enthusiasm as you grow older. And you will not find it always an easy thing to do.

Since whatever success I have attained has been due to my efforts to retain my enthusiasm, I will tell you briefly how I have tried to manage it. I have done it first of all by keeping my circulation and digestion in good order. Fresh air and regular daily exercise are absolute necessities. They are the only sure medicine for driving away the doubts and fears that are the greatest enemies of accomplishment. The moment you begin to entertain any doubts of your ability to do a thing is the moment when your failure begins. And these doubts usually come from a sluggish circulation or an improper care of the body.

If I am about to try to jump over some

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obstacle, whether it is a table or some mental difficulty in producing a picture, I first try to get a clear mental picture of myself successfully accomplishing it. I get a clear vision of the thing already done, and then doing it, if it is within my power, is comparatively simple. I refuse to admit to myself the possibility that I cannot do it. I suppose that thinking in pictures of this sort is partly the result of my work on the screen where everything is a matter of images. But whatever the cause, I have found it a very helpful habit.

Speaking of obstacles, upon which enthusiasm often trips and falls, I tried to train myself in a new way of looking at them. I felt that, since the world was so full of them, it would be better to cultivate a taste for them. There were certain kinds of food, I knew, which one does not like naturally and for which one has to acquire a taste. I de-

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cided to see if I could not acquire a taste for obstacles in the same way. When there were no natural obstacles in my path, I used to create them, just to get used to going over them. If the direct path was too simple, I took a roundabout one which made me jump over and tear through things. I did the same thing mentally. When I had nothing particularly on my mind, I used to say to myself: "What would I do if at this very moment I were asked to make a five minute speech on trade unions?" If some one was with me, I would take one side of the question and he the other and we would argue it out as if we were having a public debate, usually with the result of proving that neither of us knew very much about the question. But it is great mental exercise, and, when mental hazards come in the course of your work, you have cultivated such a familiarity with

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them and such a taste for them that you go at them with positive relish. Personally I like obstacles. Instead of dampening enthusiasm, they quicken it. I still practice all these experiments with physical and mental obstacles. It has become not only a habit but a very pleasant pastime. And it keeps the body and mind in great condition.

Of course, no one can maintain enthusiasm very long over any purpose that is not a worthy one. It is hard to think, for instance, of an enthusiastic gambler or an enthusiastic pawnbroker—that is to say, in the sense in which I am using the word. I do not believe that enthusiasm will ever accompany for any length of time any purely selfish endeavor. There comes a sure day when you are struck by doubts whether what you are doing is after all worth the effort, whether the world is in the slightest

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degree better for what you have done. And, as I have said before, doubts and fears are the two things that enthusiasm cannot survive.

If I did not believe that, in my own work, in addition to making a personal profit, I was in some measure adding to the satisfaction of other people, I fear that my joy in doing it would long ago have died. But to me there will always be a tremendous enthusiasm for all forms of artistic expression. If I can feel the chivalrous spirit of the Middle Ages, if the magic of those days sends a glow through me, that in itself is a very pleasant feeling. But if I can to some degree transfer that feeling to the screen and thence to other minds, there is a triumphant mounting of the spirits that is perhaps the very greatest sensation of all.

One can never be quite sure that his own

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ideas will fit other people. Perhaps you will discover some better way of holding on to your enthusiasms. But try to hold on to them. For if you do, the world is yours.

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CHAPTER II

THE ONLY MEDICINE I EVER TAKE

IF, after having set down what I consider to be the underlying principle of success, I now warn you that success, particularly if easily won, is a very dangerous quality which only a strong constitution can survive, it may strike you that I am contradictory. Still, I shall be no more contradictory than life itself, which often seems to resolve itself into a strange and baffling game of striving for a certain object and then wondering when you have captured it what you are going to do with it. Human nature is so constituted that most of us can meet failure with fortitude, can even extract from it a tonic or stimulus

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for fresh effort, for the one thing that never dies in human hearts is hope. The really dangerous moment in the career of an individual or a nation is the first flush of success.

I think you will understand exactly what I mean if you recall how you felt at the end of a long period of mental training for an examination or physical training for some kind of athletic competition. When the event was over and you had accomplished what you had set out for, you felt, if I am not mistaken, a sudden let-down of the spirits, a burning out of the enthusiasm which had kept you going at high speed. Your purpose accomplished, your first inclination was to relax and take it easy—to bask in the pleasant contemplation of a task well done. This mood of contentment is natural and proper enough if it does not continue too long, but if you do not soon dis-

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cover that what you have accomplished, no matter how long and arduously you have struggled for it, is only a trifle in the big scheme of things and that other greater things lie ahead, you will become a victim of the most dangerous of all maladies, the chief enemy of progress—contentment. Discontent with the conditions of life, and the earnest struggle to improve them, discontent with one's self and the desire to rebuild one's self in a better and stronger mold—this kind of discontent and the desire to remove its causes has made the world advance until it is a pretty good place to live in. To me, cheaply purchased contentment is the great evil of mankind. It leads to inaction, to flabbiness of mind and body, to self-indulgence and decay. Motion, forward motion, is the ruling principle of life. When we cease to move, to struggle, to reach out for something yet

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unaccomplished, we are ceasing to live.

This same kind of danger—that of contentment and its vices—which attacks the individual often attacks a nation. Success, or civilization, which in the case of a nation is the same thing, killed ancient Rome. She was ruined by too much civilization. The sinews of the nation became soft and flabby from too much contentment, too much ease and luxury, and decay set in. I sometimes fear that we are facing a similar plight. We have risen rapidly to such a high degree of civilization that we are in grave danger of sitting back comfortably in soft-cushioned chairs and taking things easy, of allowing our muscles to grow soft and flabby, of yielding to that crime against life itself—inaction. We have too many contraptions for comfort, too many inventions which cater to luxury, too many labor-saving devices, too many easy ways of getting things

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done. Civilization has brought us automobiles, elevators, French chefs; everything is so arranged that we can extract the maximum of pleasure with the minimum of effort. We won our civilization by battling with the forces of nature, by fighting for our food and a safe place in which to sleep, by developing powers of resistance and endurance and building up new faculties, by a sturdy reaching out for things that were beyond us. The way to lose this civilization is by complacently enjoying it, by sitting in soft chairs and having things brought to us.

My antidote for that dangerous contentment which comes to nations and individuals after a period of accomplishment is a very simple one but is, or has been in my case, very effective. It is nothing more nor less than hard physical exercise. I will make a confession to you. Several times in recent

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years, after completing a picture I have almost yielded to that demoralizing sense of satisfaction that I have spoken of. I have been in great danger of becoming contented and ceasing to strive further. The picture has "gone over" better than I had expected; I have felt that my ambition of becoming an important producer has been realized. I have seen before me pleasant avenues of idleness leading far into the future, pleasure jaunts around the world taking me wherever the fancy beckoned—a soft, easy, luxurious existence from which the inconvenience and annoyances of work were completely banished.

Fortunately at these times I have usually caught sight of some of the exercising paraphernalia that I keep on some unoccupied part of the studio grounds and have devoted an hour or so to work on a horizontal bar, to swinging myself over as great a height

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as I could manage by means of a ring attached to a long suspended rope which offers endless possibilities for new stunts, or to any other kind of activity that the spirit of the moment prompted. The effect of an hour or two of this is like magic. The blood tingles in your veins again. The thoughts of a little while ago seem like the twisted ideas of a maniac. It is like letting a breeze blow through the mind. There is no longer any exaggerated notion of the value of what you have already done—only a realization of how pitifully small any achievement has been in comparison with what it might have been—only a great pulsing desire to go forward instead of looking backward and to surpass anything you have done before. I challenge any one with a high idea of his own achievements, to walk briskly to a hilltop at night, to spend ten minutes looking at the stars, and then to return home

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with the same idea of his own importance.

It may seem that I have used a considerable amount of space in establishing the very urgent need of regular exercise in these days of comparative ease and luxury. But from most instructions on the subject you get the impression that people should exercise in order to acquire enormous biceps and become encrusted with muscles like a gorilla. I have tried to show you a more sensible reason, for few of us, I think, have any ambition to become physical giants. The great thing that exercise can do is to fix a proper balance between the body and mind, to give us a healthy, active outlook on life so that neither our petty failures will discourage us too much nor our petty triumphs give us too much cause for satisfaction and contentment. I see it as the great antidote for the softening and demoralizing effect of too much civilization.

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It will help you to realize that the fruits and rewards of labor are not nearly so enjoyable as the labor itself and that the only permanent satisfaction comes from continued activity.

The kind of exercise you take is of minor importance. The main requirement is that it shall be regular and done in a spirit of enjoyment. Perhaps the word "medicine" that I have used in the title of this article is an unfortunate one, since it suggests something disagreeable taken under compulsion. The only medicine I use is some kind of liniment for cuts and bruises. I do not believe that exercise taken in a spirit of indifference does a particle of good. If you can't get a spirit of fun in it try some other form of exercise which appeals to you.

Generally speaking, exercise of any kind becomes enjoyable when you introduce the element of competition. This does not

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mean that you must confine yourselves to tennis, baseball or other games. If there is no opponent handy to compete with, you can learn to compete with yourself. If it took you fifteen minutes to walk to school or to work yesterday, see if you can do it in fourteen to-day. Throw your head back, walk erectly, breathe deep, and you will find that although it may not be the most exciting kind of exercise, there is considerable fun in it.

I cannot give you a list of the kinds of exercise that have kept me in fine physical condition, because they have constantly changed to adapt themselves to my surroundings. When I am in the country I ride horseback every day and swim if there is water handy. But if horseback riding and swimming were denied me, it would not make the slightest difference. There are a hundred other things that I like just as

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well. Since most of my time is spent at the studio, I have to confine myself largely to the kind of exercise that I can crowd into the short intervals between working hours. I have rigged up a number of devices that permit me to combine hard exercise with the fun of competition. The most successful of these is one that I have mentioned. It consists of a ring attached to a long rope, suspended from a stout cross-bar. It is not unlike the swinging ring that you will find in every gymnasium. At one end of the pendulum swing of this ring I have placed jumping standards. Catching the ring on a run away from the standards, the idea is, on the backward swing of the rope, to see how great a height you can clear by letting go of the ring at the end of the swing and shooting over the bar on the standards. There are usually plenty of competitors in this sport, but if there aren't

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any, it makes no difference. If I cleared twelve feet yesterday and can't make it today, I know that there is something wrong with me. In this fashion I compete with myself. I do all the stunts I can think of on parallel bars which are part of my outdoor gymnasium and try to invent new ones. The more imagination you get into exercise, the more fun you have and the more good it does you. The game I play most at present is a relative of tennis and a descendant of the old English game of battledore and shuttlecock. This is the fastest and hardest exercise I have ever taken. Some of my friends have christened this game "Doug," but by any other name it would be as fast.

But if all these devices and games with which I like to surround myself were thrown into the Pacific Ocean, I wouldn't care a snap. There are always steps and platforms which challenge me to jump them,

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there are always people to wrestle with, and projections from which I can chin myself. In exercise, like almost everything else in life, it is not the outward form but the spirit behind that counts. If you have this spirit, you will not confine your exercise to any set form or any number of minutes or hours a day. I suppose that ten minutes of perfunctory exercising in the morning is better than nothing, but personally I am prejudiced against that kind of thing. It seems to lack that spirit I speak of. I would just as soon confine my thinking to a certain number of minutes a day, or my religion to a portion of Sunday morning.

So let me tell you that if you think that you are living under conditions or in surroundings that make proper exercising impossible, there are no such conditions or such surroundings. Not if you have the spirit and the desire. My work is as ex-

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acting as that of most people, but I find time for exercise each day because I know it is an absolute necessity. When I am living in a New York hotel, although the conditions are not very favorable, I get the same amount of exercise. Even when I am traveling across the continent I devise some means of exercise, although it is a poor substitute for out-of-door games. When a Pullman porter finds me chinning myself on the upper berth, he may think I am crazy, but it is a very harmless form of insanity.

My own methods must be successful as far as I am concerned, for at the age of forty I can do any physical feat that I could do at twenty, but I cannot prescribe them for you. You will have to invent your own system. The one thing I can confidently advise you to do is to beg, borrow or steal the equivalent of two hours' hard exercise

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a day. If you do this, you will rarely need any other medicine to keep your body strong and resistant against illness and your mind clear and efficient. It is the only way I know of to beat the effects of too much civilization. Resist everything that tends to make you soft and satisfied. If your food comes too easily, make a game of eating. Take your soup from the mantel and chase your pie across the back yard. I do not need to explain that I do not mean this literally. What I *do* mean is *keep in motion* and do not accept the benefits of civilization too easily. Work, fight, play for everything. If you will do this, you will need no other medicine.

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CHAPTER III

SUNRISE AND OTHER THINGS

WHEN I wrote of the pitfalls of contentment and the dangers of too much civilization and urged you, when the path is too smooth and life too easy, to create obstacles for yourselves, to make a game out of living, to pursue your food so that you may eat it with greater relish and better digestion, I was not joking. Or if I was, I am to be excused, for it is a joke which I often play upon myself. On a Sunday morning before the sun is up and the hills of Beverly, where I live, are still sleeping under a blanket of mist and darkness, I chase my breakfast to the top of a mountain and manage to overtake it just as the first

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fingers of dawn are touching the hilltops.

Early rising, I know, is a pastime which most people will admit at once is a great thing for others. I once invited to my home a man who kept me up until two o'clock at night with a powerful argument in favor of early rising and then slept until eleven o'clock the next morning. The most profound conclusion I can arrive at on this subject is that early rising is a great thing for those who like it.

It depends, I suppose, on the part of the day you like best. Each has its special mood and charm. If you take the verdict of poets and song writers, twilight, with its sentiment and melancholy, easily wins first place in the affections of mankind. Midnight, by wrapping a veil around things, makes life magical and mysterious. It is a time when imagination and emotion, no longer held in leash by the commonplace

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facts of daytime, run away with us. But one thing is certain. You will have to choose; you cannot enjoy the pleasures of both midnight and sunrise. For me, the dawn—the beginning of a new day, with the air keen and fresh, and the sun sending the vapors of night and the cares and troubles of yesterday scurrying into the distance.

I presume that this preference for the dawn is explained by the fact that I like beginnings better than endings and promise better than fulfilment. I find a greater mystery in birth than in death. I like looking forward better than backward and would rather anticipate what is to come than review what has already gone before.

Sunrise provides a great acid test for the thoughts that come to you late at night. Take out the idea that took possession of you the night before and hold it up between you and the rising sun. If it still seems

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reasonable you can be pretty sure that it is a sound one. But in many cases, I am afraid, it will strike you as fantastic and impracticable and will disappear like a sprite with the first streak of dawn. The ideas that come to you at sunrise may not have quite the same imaginative quality as those that are born in the silence and shadows of evening, but as a rule they will stand up better and live longer.

But enough of this philosophy. It is time to get up. It is four o'clock on a Sunday morning in southern California and if we are to see the sun rise, we must be stirring. It is still dark with just a pale glimmer of light streaking the east. A solitary coyote, one of a band which steals down nightly from the mountains to prowl about the house, is barking a protest against the coming dawn, but save for this sound

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and the first notes of a mocking bird tuning up for the day's performance, there is dead silence. It is something of an effort to propel one's self out of bed, for it is warm and comfortable and California nights even in the summer are damp and chilly. But it is worth the struggle.

There are two things which seem to be almost impossible. One is to take a cold bath every morning without bragging about it, and the other is to get up early in the morning without an irresistible impulse to wake other people up and tell them what they are missing. I am consumed with a vast pity for my unfortunate guests who are with me for the week-end. Poor folk, they are lying stupidly in bed, when they might be outdoors, enjoying the freshness of early morning. I lose no time in going to their rooms and waking them up. Some of them seem to think that I have conferred a doubt-

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ful favor by arousing them, but they get up none the less. It is one of the penalties they have to pay for visiting me.

In a few minutes we have horses saddled and some one has been sent ahead to our destination with provisions for breakfast. It is now almost clear daylight and a brisk breeze is tearing the veil of mist from hill and cañon. Back in the city of Los Angeles a few lights are still palely burning and night seems to linger there, but the hilltops ahead of us are already catching the glow of dawn. We must hurry if we are to beat the sunrise to the top of the mountain.

Our path is so densely buried beneath brush and thicket that we would have difficulty in clinging to it if it were not for our sure-footed western ponies which need no guidance. If it were not for our chaps, the whipping of branch and twig, as we dash upward, would be extremely painful. Even

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as it is, they sting and hurt a little. The ridge which the path follows is a narrow one and on either side there are deep cañons. A misstep would be dangerous. But without some danger, there is no flavor to adventure. There is a primitive wilderness ahead, and the only reminder of civilization is when we look back at the city still slumbering at our feet. To the west the Pacific Ocean is dimly visible, gray and mysterious in the neutral light of early morning. And one can discern the long island of Catalina, which tourists like to visit, in the distance.

There is a terrific scurrying in the underbrush as we stir up some wild animal in hiding. Maybe it is a coyote, maybe a wildcat, maybe a mountain lion. As long as we are guessing we might as well make the guess a good one. This gives two of us an idea. We dash ahead of the others and lie in wait-

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ing for them behind a dense thicket. As they pass us we rush upon them with a yell. And they, after a moment of panic, pretend, of course, that they knew who it was all the time and weren't startled at all. It's all fun, all adventure, all high spirits—a natural reaction and relief at breaking away from the cramping effect of the cities, of too much conventionality and too much civilization.

We have reached the spur, which was our objective, in just half an hour. We have beaten the sun by a scant five minutes, for the east is now kindling with a tremendous glow. The man we sent ahead has not been wasting time. Already a fire is burning in an improvised stove made of hastily assembled stones and enough assorted food is cooking to ration a small army. One pleasant thing about pursuing your food is that you don't need the advice of a dietitian.

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After a hot pursuit, you are in a condition to devour cobblestones and digest them easily. We have ham and eggs, jam, coffee, hot cakes and maple syrup, which if taken at home in the quantities we now consume would completely unfit us for the day.

We are a strange and motley looking gathering, as the sun breaks over the rim of the world and lights up the oddities of our costumes. Most of my guests do not come prepared for this sort of jaunt and I have had to outfit them as best I could. Chaps drawn on over oriental pajama suits and purple smoking jackets give a comic opera touch to our expedition. One of my guests carries a long scratch across his countenance where a rebellious twig slapped him. But everybody is hungry and happy. And everybody exclaims as usual over that daily miracle—the rising of the sun—just as

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if it were a personal discovery. I like this. To me, the sunlight slanting over the fair country of southern California with its infinite variety, its hills, its rugged cañons and its peaceful ocean, demands some sort of vocal demonstration. It may not be dignified. It may not be a high form of artistic appreciation. But when I see the sun bound up over the California hills, I shout. I can't help it.

The morning, as I have said, is a good time to test out the thoughts of yesterday. After you have climbed a mountain and eaten a hearty breakfast, it is pleasant to settle back for a while and take things easy; to watch the fire go out, and see the landscape kindle with the light and warmth of a new day. Our particular location makes a pleasant background for thinking. Civilization is behind us and wilderness ahead. In one direction we could lose ourselves in the

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mountains, but in the other a big city sprawls at our feet and we have the satisfaction of knowing that in a few minutes we can recapture all the comforts and refinements of modern life. It is possible to balance one against the other and taste the pleasures of each. To the north, steadily mounting foothills lead to the Santa Monica mountains. To the south lies Hollywood with its bright Spanish roofs, and its level boulevards leading to the ocean.

In the far distance there are strange-looking conglomerations of architecture, ancient, medieval and modern, which might puzzle the casual observer until he remembers that this is Hollywood and that the odd edifices he sees are only motion picture "sets," serving as backgrounds for picture plays representing various periods in history. Perhaps the most fantastic of all is our own studio where the medieval castle of

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"Robin Hood," still standing, rubs shoulders with the spires and minarets of the ancient city of Bagdad, newly erected for our present production, "The Thief of Bagdad."

This brings me to the thoughts of yesterday. Last night, in a pessimistic moment, it seemed to me that the motion picture industry was perhaps a weak and feeble sort of pastime which was hardly worth the effort that went into it. These gloomy moments come to all of us. But to-day, as I sit in the morning sunlight, everything seems different. I am confident that whatever its weaknesses and present shortcomings may be, it is the greatest medium for expression the world has ever known, and that it will ride sooner or later to a high destiny. It reaches more people than the combined art, history and literature of all time. And for thousands of people it provides the only

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touch of color and romance that creeps into their lives.

Those of us who are engaged in this form of entertainment should be conscious of a great obligation, for it is in our power to shape and direct its future. Indirectly this same obligation is shared by the public, of which the youth of this country is the most important part. There has never been any kind of art which is equally responsive to the demands of the audience. If you don't get the kind of pictures you want you must blame yourselves a little. For every producer is struggling to give you exactly what you want, and if you make this want emphatically enough known, in the end you will get it. The trouble is that although the box office serves as a kind of barometer of public approval, there has never been any very emphatic or well-voiced expression of opinion which will set the stamp of approval

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on what is good and condemn what is bad.

But thinking is a luxury which one may not continue too long on an expedition of this sort. Such rambling thoughts as have come to us give way before the necessity for action. The breakfast things must be taken care of and the fire completely extinguished, for forest fires are too common occurrences in this locality. Once started, they sweep over the hills for miles, charring the entire landscape and endangering lives and homes.

We have had enough rest, enough meditation for a while. What we want now is action, motion, speed. We are in the saddle again, a little stiff from sitting so long but eager to take the trail home. Downward we plung through the thicket, bracing ourselves—so steep is the descent—so that we will not slide over the heads of our horses. In a few minutes we are in the depth of the

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valley where the sun has not penetrated and it is still almost as black as midnight. In the clothes which protected us from the chill of early morning we are now hot, sticky and uncomfortable. The same inspiration occurs to us all simultaneously—the swimming pool! We race for it, just as as we raced for the sun earlier in the morning.

We come out of the pool, greatly refreshed and invigorated, glad that we are alive and amazed to find that it is still only six o'clock and that just two hours have elapsed since we arose. But if you try, you can crowd a lot of fun into two hours.

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CHAPTER IV

ON GETTING A START IN LIFE

SO you see," concluded the pompous gentleman who had been reviewing his past for the delectation of a younger audience and whose achievements loomed much larger in his own mind than in anybody else's—"So you see how I got my start in life."

"Yes," remarked a facetious listener, "I see what gave you your start in life but what was it that stopped you?"

This is not quoted as an example of rare humor, but because it represents an attitude of protest and rebellion which is growing in people's minds against the flood of advice, sermons on success, and easy lessons in great-

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ness which is swamping the world to-day. We are living in a time of quack remedies, short cuts and magic formulas. If something is wrong with your health, instead of removing the cause, just take Mr. So-and-So's new treatment and you will be yourself, or somebody better, in short order. If economic or industrial or political conditions are in a bad tangle, Mr. What's-His-Name has a cure-all which will prevent anything from a labor strike to a European war. By reading a single number of almost any current magazine you will find how without particular talent or long period of labor you can become a ruling figure in the world of finance, art or science—a wizard in any line of work you choose to take up. Your salary will increase by the most astonishing leaps and bounds.

Now this, of course, is the most arrant nonsense, as any one knows. We are suf-

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fering from an epidemic of too much advice, too many instructions on how to achieve distinction of one sort or another. We are so saturated with expert information on how to do things that we incline to overlook the fact that the principal thing is to do them, and the only way to do them is by the hardest and most grueling labor—the kind that leaves you so exhausted you will have little energy to absorb quack notions handed to you on a silver platter by people who think they have discovered quick and easy routes to greatness.

So if I were to advise you who are trying to get the right start in life, I would advise you to stop listening to advice and paying attention to other people's rules, including my own. All I can hope to do in these little essays is to stimulate your appetite for accomplishment. You will have to do the rest. I cannot give you any ready-made curric-

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ulum on how to conduct your lives successfully. And neither—I think—can anybody else. I do not mean to say that you can not absorb helpful hints and inspiration by studying the lives of men of accomplishment. But do not attempt to pattern yourselves too rigidly on some one else's model. His way of living may suit him to perfection but it may be the worst thing in the world for you. I used to know a fine oarsman, a champion single sculler, who won race after race against the keenest competition and used to arrive at the boat landing, just before the race, smoking a long black cigar. Imagine how ridiculous it would have been if this man had seriously prescribed his own habits for others and had said, "The way to win boat races is to smoke a cigar before every race." And you have read no doubt many times in the newspapers of men who live to be a hundred years old and who state,

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as if there were some connection between the two facts, that they have always helped themselves liberally to Scotch whisky. I mention these exaggerated cases to emphasize the absurdity of trying to apply the notions and habits of other people to yourself.

If you will study yourselves carefully, you can make your own rules and administer your own advice. You will know almost instinctively what is good for *you*. Some one whom you admire may tell you very convincingly that the time to do one's best work is at night. But if you can work best in the early part of the day—as most of us can—don't be influenced by what he says. Follow your own impulses. Just because a man who is accomplishing wonders goes without eating until evening, don't jump to the conclusion that this is the thing for you to do. For in nine cases out of ten it isn't.

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Try things out and discover under what conditions you can get along best. Then make your own rules.

I would not bother too much about how other people have got their start in life. It's better to be a self-starter, and begin in your own way. You may find that many of our great men spent their early youth in log cabins, read by candle-light, split rails or painted barns to help out the family exchequer. But there is no more relation between these humble beginnings and later success than there is between boat racing and cigar smoking. They simply show that these men had a power to conquer adverse circumstance and to move ahead in spite of a bad start. Many of our presidents have come from Ohio, many of our most talented writers from Indiana. But no one but a lunatic would seriously recommend to young men with political aspirations that they im-

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mediately change their residence to Ohio, or to young men with ambitions to become great writers that they move to Indiana, any more than one would advise you to leave a comfortable home and intern yourselves in a log cabin as a fitting preparation for future greatness.

It seems that many of our leading financiers left home in early youth and hit the big city without a cent in their pockets. This is another of the old familiar traditions as to how to start out in life. But I would hesitate to recommend it. If you hit the town in this reckless fashion, it is quite likely to hit back.

All I am trying to say is that these pleasant old traditions make diverting reading but hardly furnish an infallible guide to future greatness. It will take a more profound person than I am to establish the relation of cause and effect between these

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early beginnings and later success of life. The best you can do is to adapt yourselves to your own circumstances, whatever they may be, and make the most of them. If they seem to cramp and handicap you the battle against them will develop strength, courage, and the habit of surmounting difficulties—qualities which will be of immense value to you through life.

If the college is within your reach, by all means avail yourselves of a college course and do not accept the silly notion that four years of abstract academic training will unfit you for the practical problems of life. The more your mind is trained in studying science, art, philosophy, the history and customs and languages of the past, the better it will be prepared to grapple with the problems of the present, which with a little variation are only the old ones repeated. If on the other hand, circumstances make

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college impossible, you will find many consolations; among them that some of the best educated men never went to college and that many of the leaders in the world of business to-day had almost no schooling at all. Teaching yourself, which is what these men had to do, requires much more patience and harder work than absorbing education from experts, but sometimes it is more effective. To be absolutely impartial in this matter of condemning other people's rules of living and theories of success as applied to you, I would like to include my own. They have worked out very well for me, but I can think of no greater folly than of foisting them upon other people.

For example, I believe that I got my first real impetus in life by borrowing a thousand dollars. I decided that I wanted to see the world. So I borrowed this money and toured Europe. My struggle to repay

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this obligation gave me a momentum which continued after the money was paid. It gave me the habit of continuous activity, of extending myself to the utmost. The ordinary human being will do exactly what he has to do and not very much more. I had to pay back that thousand dollars and to do it I had to work as I never worked before. Incidentally on this trip abroad I met a producer who afterwards signed me up for a long-term contract on the stage.

But I hardly need to tell you how preposterous it would be for me to advise you to start out in life by borrowing money. It happened to work in my case. My own theory is that the more obligations a man has the harder he will work. A man exerts himself most when he is in a hole and has to fight his way out. The more the odds are against him the harder he will struggle to equalize them.

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But this might be a very dangerous philosophy for you to follow, and if I were you I would throw it into the same discard with other people's theories in general and build my own philosophy and my own rules of living, borrowing the precepts of others only when I was sure they fitted me.

No man is quite sincere who accounts for his start in life or his later success without taking into consideration the element of luck. It has become popular to advise youth that nothing in the world counts but one's own efforts and the determination to succeed. But to be quite frank about it, this is not the whole truth. There is such a thing as luck and we might as well admit it. Otherwise how do you account for the fact that Jones and Smith both started out with equal advantages, with nearly equal ability, with the same determination to succeed and that Jones is a multimillionaire,

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holding an important executive position in one of the biggest industries in the country, and Smith a small-salaried man holding a subordinate place. Apparently Smith has spared no effort in his struggle for success, but something went wrong; but with Jones, something quite beyond his own calculations and control lifted him to a position way beyond his wildest expectations. Or take the case of Brown and Green. Brown was interested in real estate and had his eye on a piece of property in Hollywood belonging to Green. On the day when Green was to sell his property at a low figure to Brown, he was the victim of an automobile accident and was in the hospital for several months. When he came out he found that his property had increased a hundred per cent in value and that he had made many thousand of dollars by accidentally holding on to it. Certainly Brown was not to blame for

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Green's accident. If it hadn't happened, Brown would have made the money instead of Green. This was good luck for Green and bad luck for Brown.

But there are two things to bear in mind about luck. One is that, since it is entirely beyond our control, there is no use in worrying about it. The other is that after all it is fairly evenly divided and you will get plenty of both kinds. Opportunity, which is another name for luck, will come to you sooner or later. You can bank on that. If you are ready for it—that is to say if you have trained yourself in mental alertness and physical fitness so that you can make full use of it—you will have all the ingredients of success. But opportunity, without the proper preparation, without the ability to seize it, turns out to be a hollow and useless thing. It passes swiftly, leaving only a pitiful realization of what might

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have been. Honest and persistent endeavor toward the realization of some worthy purpose, a faith that acts as a shock absorber to all the jolts along the rough road of life, an enthusiasm that laughs at adversity, and a regulation of one's life so that body and mind are at their best—these are the fundamentals. Turn your back upon them and you will be like a man in a foot race who starts to run in the wrong direction. The most colossal luck in the world cannot help you.

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CHAPTER V

THE OTHER FELLOW'S POINT OF VIEW

HAVING tried to explain what age may learn from youth, it now seems only fair to turn the tables and show, if I can, what youth may learn from age.

To you who are embarked upon the tempestuous adventure of youth, with the blood boiling in your veins and ambition calling to you, this thing that you may learn from age may seem a pale and feeble quality compared with the more ostentatious prizes that life has to offer. This meek and unimposing quality will put no more money in your pockets. I doubt whether it will have any bearing on what the world calls "success." But I will guarantee that whether or

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not the thing I speak of will commend itself instantly to you, the method of procuring it which I will outline later will have your eager approval. Not to make a conundrum out of it, the quality I have in mind is tolerance.

I do not believe, as I have said before, in any of the quack remedies, in any of the swift and easy routes to success and happiness which are so current in the world today. I have no passion for reforming the world. I know no method of so altering human nature and draining off its weaknesses that men will begin at once to return borrowed umbrellas. But I do believe that the more we learn and practice the virtue of tolerance, the better place the world will be to live in.

Since words mean different things to different people, let me see if I can explain what tolerance means to me. Then if it

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seems to you a desirable quality, I will show you a most agreeable way of acquiring it. We are all gazing upon a more or less familiar world with different eyes,—almost as if we were wearing spectacles with different colored lenses. What seems highly important to you strikes somebody else as trivial and silly; what interests and excites you bores and annoys another; what seems right to you seems entirely wrong to some one else and *vice versa*. The hardest thing for us to understand is people whose ideas and tastes differ from our own. We have a secret feeling that there is something wrong with them. They may not be positively insane but they are at least trembling on the border of insanity. If your favorite study is mathematics and your favorite outdoor sport is baseball, you will be inclined to view with suspicion some one whose tastes run to Latin poetry, and golf. And if you have a prac-

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tical mind leaning toward business, you will look with pity upon your acquaintance who is stuffing his mind with useless ideas about literature and the fine arts. Your neighbor is a shiftless fellow who never keeps his lawn properly mowed and lets weeds overrun his garden. Do you know what he thinks about you? He wonders if it wouldn't be a good thing if you spent less time in trimming your grounds and more time in trimming your mind which he thinks is so overrun with weeds that you can't use it properly.

If I were to state in one sentence what tolerance means to me, I should say that it was the rare gift of getting the other man's point of view. It means a sufficient acknowledgment of our own deficiencies so that we hesitate to judge other people too harshly. It means an understanding which allows for some other point of view than our own,—a soft, charitable bent of the mind

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which has come to understand that the frailties of human nature are a common inheritance from which none of us are exempt and that the chief difference between us and those we condemn is that they make a different kind of mistake. The quality of tolerance admits that other people have the same right to arrange their lives, to pursue their ambitions and choose their pleasures that we have. If we are annoyed by their manner of living and their habits of thought, we can be quite sure that there are several people who would like to see us shot at sunrise for ours.

Tolerance is unfortunately so much more uncommon than intolerance that in trying to find examples of the former I find my mind flooded with instances of the latter. I think of the soldier who complained that every one else in the company was out of step with him. In any one of our political

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campaigns you will see intolerance swaggering out into the field, armed with its usual weapons of abuse and denunciation. You will find one ardent partisan condemning his opponent as an idiot, a scoundrel and a man of loose principles who would willingly betray his country simply because he holds a different opinion on the League of Nations, or government ownership or some other issue upon which it is conceivable that people might honestly disagree. This vilification of people who do not agree with us, this violent absorption in our own point of view and reluctance to admit the possibility of any other, furnish a very good example of the exact opposite of what I mean by tolerance. It is the commonest mental malady I know of and, like many others, attacks youth most severely. As one grows older, some fortunate mellowing influence sets in. The suspicion arises in your mind that in

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some things at least you may be wrong and others right. You find yourself studying other people's views and reconnoitering on the other side of the question with a certain pleasure. And it dawns on you suddenly that you must have some better reason for holding any belief than the fact that you have always held it before. You become gradually intolerant of yourself and tolerant of others, which is a very good sign. So, just as enthusiasm makes a gay and rollicking companion for youth, tolerance makes a comforting counsellor for later years.

The prescription which I offer as a cure for this widespread disease of intolerance is, as I promised you, so agreeable and easy to take that I think you will be inclined to follow it whether you have the malady or not. It consists simply in travel. Do not misunderstand me. I do not intend that you should immediately start out on a tour

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of Central Africa. But you can at least make frequent journeys away from your immediate environment. Without been conscious of it you are slowly becoming a slave to that environment; your eyes day after day are filled with the same images, your minds with the same ideas, your social world with the same people. Viewing things constantly from the same angle, narrows the vision, shuts up the mind and kills the imagination. If I lived continuously in Hollywood, in the atmosphere of motion picture production, I might quite conceivably come to the conclusion that this was the one important business of the world, that the camera gave the only proper interpretation of life, and that nothing else mattered.

You are living, let us say, in Springfield (an imaginary Springfield in any state). Take a little trip to Hillsboro, about ten miles away. If I am not mistaken, you are

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strongly of the opinion that everything about Springfield is superior to Hillsboro. The people in your town have more sense, are more progressive citizens and better fellows in every way than these misguided people who for some obscure reason have chosen to live in a place like Hillsboro. Walk, if you can, to Hillsboro, and on the way let the sun and wind get into your system and take some of the kinks and prejudices out of your mind. You will be surprised to find that these benighted people who live in Hillsboro average up pretty well, and, except for one ridiculous notion, are just as useful members of society as the citizens of your own home town. This notion is that they are a trifle higher in the scale of life than your unfortunate townsmen who are condemned to live in a place like Springfield.

Everywhere you go you will find this ex-

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aggerated loyalty to a particular locality, which we call provincialism and which is a form of intolerance, since it has little use for other places and other customs. I was sitting one winter night in a New York hotel with a native New Yorker whose mental horizon did not go beyond Manhattan Island and who thought that civilization had never penetrated west of the Hudson River. It suddenly occurred to me that both he and I had been living too long in the shadow of elevated railways, skyscrapers and metropolitan hotels. We needed new images in our minds, wider horizons, a fresh point of view. Having an adventurous spirit, he promised to accompany me wherever I went. Three days later we stepped off the train at Boulder, Colorado, and started across the Great Divide on horseback. A fierce blizzard was raging and we were warned against making the trip at

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that time. But we went ahead, got lost at nightfall in a deep ravine and were almost frozen to death when we were finally found by the ranger who had set out after us. But it was worth it, for we had lost our stale outlook on life and received a fresh point of view. I felt amply rewarded when, several months later, back in New York I overheard my companion addressing a group of friends as follows: "This cramped and narrow life in New York may be all right for you boys if you like it, but give me the wide spaces out west where you can breathe deep and think your own thoughts. Let me tell you about the night I spent crossing the Great Divide. . . ."

If you can manage it, it is well to start your travels early in life while the mind is still impressionable. I took my first trip abroad on a cattle ship, with fifty dollars in my pocket. I was gone three months and

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saw a great deal of Europe. Although I have taken the trip many times since, this first one, with its struggles and its hardships and the daily necessity of earning enough to eat and sleep, was by far the most enjoyable. I worked with street gangs, unloaded cobblestones from barges and formed amazing contacts with all sorts of people. By absorbing or at least examining their point of view I corrected and broadened my own. I found that a London cab driver's philosophy of life was fully as good as my own and that a Belgian peasant could talk more intelligently on the politics of the world than I could.

But the discovery that amazed me the most was that beneath the differences of language and custom, the foreigner was remarkably like us. The English workingman, for instance, was confronted with precisely the same problems as our own work-

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ingman. In his tastes, his desires, the whole routine of his life with its petty satisfactions and its petty annoyances, the Frenchman was in no way different from us. This, of course, seemed surprising to me at first, for the very word "foreigner" suggests some one who is strange, remote and different from us. But I found that his chief eccentricity consisted in being born in a different country. This country that he was born in was, according to his views, the best country in the world, but I hardly knew how to blame him for that, since that is precisely the feeling that we have about our own country. If you are talking with an Englishman, you will be surprised to learn that he honestly considers a country better off under a king and a parliament than under a president and a congress. And, if you take the trouble to study his government carefully, you will be even more surprised to discover that in some

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respects he is right. Even if your loyalty to your own institutions holds you back from such a conclusion, the fair-minded examination of his point of view is a very healthy and broadening exercise for the mind.

In other words you will be gradually acquiring that intensely desirable quality of tolerance. For knowledge and tolerance usually travel together. The more you learn, the more you will realize the very small compass of the human intelligence and the more prepared you will be to admit that in the large field of knowledge which you have not explored there may lie more truths than in the small parcel of information you have collected.

It will be inconvenient, I know, for most of you to pull up stakes and set forth immediately for foreign places. But I would consider it a pleasant obligation upon myself to do this whenever opportunity

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presents itself. In the meantime, there are shorter journeys open to every one. There are walking trips and riding trips and excursions by water. In general I would plan these in such a way that they would take me to surroundings and conditions of life as different as possible from those to which I was accustomed. You have no idea how eagerly the mind will respond to the change, how readily it will discharge stale and tiresome images for fresh ones and exchange old ideas for new ones. And there is one kind of travel you can take without moving a step. This is an excursion into other people's minds, either by reading or in conversation. I would particularly cultivate people who disagreed with me, for in getting the other fellow's point of view, you will broaden and strengthen your own.

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CHAPTER VI

KEEP ON MOVING

NO doubt you have felt a certain sense of indignation, of protest against the infringement upon the personal liberty to which you consider yourself entitled, if, when standing upon a busy street corner in a big city, a policeman has commanded you to "keep on moving," or when making your way in leisurely fashion from a subway or elevated train, the conductor has urged you to "step lively!"

And yet these custodians are voicing a much higher dictate, a much more universal command, than any man-made regulations for law and order. Unconsciously they are expressing the ruling principle of nature,

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of life itself. This law of motion began long before the advent of man and will run as long as the sands of time. It is a law which nature never breaks and man can break only with disaster to himself. In the beginning of things some impulse, which most of us believe to be a divine one, set the universe in motion. Nebulous or fine granular matter began whirling through space with a terrific momentum, later—after countless ages—to solidify, to form clusters of stars, solar systems; in short, what we call the universe. This initial motion has never subsided. There is no luminary in the heavens that is not traveling in some direction at a rate of speed compared with which the fleetest aeroplane crawls at a snail's pace through the air. If this earth upon which we are so comfortably riding at a rate of sixteen miles a second—and which seems so solid and immovable—should in some in-

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explicable way lose the momentum which carries it around the sun, it would plunge like an arrow into the hot caverns of the sun and all its civilization and all its grandeur would come to a tragic end. If you will study astronomy, a most entertaining exercise for the mind and the imagination, you will find that I have not exaggerated.

Now this principle of motion governs not only suns and planets and everything else in nature, but human beings as well. When they remain in motion life flows smoothly and pleasantly without untoward incident, but when they cease to move, when they cease to be vigorously active and progressive, the same kind of tragedy on a smaller scale overtakes them as the imaginary disaster which I described as happening to the earth. It is not so spectacular or appalling, but it is just as sure. If you stand still you make an excellent target for all the ills and

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misfortunes to which human nature is prey, but while you are moving you are harder to hit and you dodge most of them. You will find that a large percentage of all human calamities—ill health, poverty, accidents, crime and vice—descend upon people who have ceased to move, whose vitality and power of resistance are no longer strengthened and stimulated by activity. Some of these misfortunes attack you, to be sure, even if you are in motion, but they hit you only glancing blows which may temporarily retard, but do not cripple you.

When I speak of motion as applied to human beings I mean some useful kind of activity, the continual struggle along the path of achievement toward some appointed goal, the normal human impulse to project ourselves forward in the direction of some ideal. Whether we ever reach this objective is of comparatively little importance, so

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long as every ounce of energy goes into the struggle. When we learn that it is the fight that counts more than what we are fighting to acquire, that there is more pleasure and happiness to be found in working for a thing than there is in getting it, more enjoyment in keen pursuit than there is in the reward that lies at the end of the trail, we have learned a most valuable lesson. Study the people you know. Who are the healthy ones, the happy ones? Those who have chosen to withdraw from the turmoil and adventure of active life and to sit back in soft-cushioned luxury? or the other sort —those who are still working for something that lies beyond, those who are still in motion? I do not need to tell you that happiness lies all on the side of the latter. I believe that man's capacity for happiness can never exceed his appetite for work, his desire to keep on moving. I would rather

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be what the world calls a failure and be making vigorous motions to get along than the kind of success who has come to a standstill, who took his first achievement as a signal to stop work forever. It is this kind of success, with its demoralizing ease and indolence, its arrested functioning of the faculties, that ruins men more often than the kind of failure which I first mentioned. Defeat often hardens the muscles and strengthens the will, while victory, especially if it is easily won, tends to make one smug, complacent, soft and inactive. I shall never wish to retire from active life until I am ready to retire from life altogether.

There are two periods in life when one is most likely to become a victim of arrested motion, of aimless drifting. One comes after a certain measure of achievement, when a man has acquired a fair degree of prosperity and decides to take things easy

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and enjoy some of the fruits of his labor. The other comes at an earlier stage, which I will take up later. First watch the misguided man who determines to retire from active life and enjoy himself. If he doesn't go to pieces it will be a miracle. Gradually the fine zest in living which he felt when he was active deserts him. The enjoyment which he seeks becomes a phantom. The days hang heavy on his hands and he views the prospect of other days to come without enthusiasm. There comes a sluggishness of mind and body, neither of which thrives on inactivity. He finds himself floating about in an uninteresting vacuum, aimless, motionless and discontented. Having no real problems to occupy his mind he invents imaginary ones which are much harder to solve than real ones. He becomes morbid and pessimistic, immersed in a profound dissatisfaction with himself and life. Com-

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pare this figure of suspended animation and gloomy outlook with the same figure who attacked life before with such a fine frenzy, who welcomed trouble so that he might develop the strength to conquer and relished obstacles because they incited him to higher effort, and you have a tragic comparison. Often, to make matters worse, he is stricken with some illness which would never have touched him so long as he kept in motion. It is a pity, I often think, that some benevolent custodian of his welfare, some policeman of the spirit, some conductor of our larger transportation through life, cannot tap him on the shoulder and say "Keep on moving!" or "Step lively!"

The other period of which I spoke is when one falls under the temptation of idleness in early youth. Instead of being a retirement from work, as in the other case, this is a hesitancy about getting started.

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There seem to be so many avenues of accomplishment and so much time as one looks ahead in which to do things, that one hesitates to do anything at all. And it is a curious illusion that as soon as we embark on one road of accomplishment, all the other roads seem infinitely more alluring. Some one else's job always seems a little more satisfactory than our own. To the writer, putting colors on canvas seems a much easier and more inviting occupation than his own, and to the business man, the profession of medicine with its short office hours and high fees seems such a sinecure that it is like taking money under false pretenses. But while youth is contemplating the opportunities that glitter ahead of him, wasting his time in false starts, and yielding to the lure of a thousand bypaths that do not lead anywhere, he is forming a dangerous habit. Hesitation about choos-

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ing a career is natural enough, but when continued so long that it becomes a habit it is likely to be fatal. You have all met the type of person who is always about to accomplish something in a few days or weeks or months. But somehow present conditions always seem to be adverse—the present moment always the wrong one to start. He expects that in some mysterious way circumstances in the future will take a sudden swing in his favor and that he will then be able to get at that important piece of work that lies ahead. The trouble is that it always lies ahead. One of the oldest anecdotes I can recall is the one about the man who looked continually forward to repairing a hole in the roof of his house, but when it was raining he couldn't do it, and when it was pleasant weather, it didn't matter. People of the sort I have described do not realize that their chief enemy is not

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circumstances conspiring against them, adverse conditions or lack of opportunity, but the fatal habit of inaction which kills all initiative and drains the will of all its power of accomplishment. If I were starting life over again, I am not at all sure what I would do, but I would do something quickly, so that I might at least form the habit of activity rather than the habit of hesitation and idleness.

I am not sure that my life is a pattern that other people would care to follow. Perhaps I go to an extreme in the matter of motion. I do not like idleness because it makes me discontented. I try to fill every waking hour in the day with some stimulating sort of activity, either of body or mind. Most people will advise you to check your work and your worries when you leave your office at the close of the day. But if I am interested in what I am doing I cannot dis-

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miss it quite so peremptorily. It comes to my mind during the evening and my best ideas often come to me in the morning when I wake up.

Whenever I become thoroughly fatigued, what I want is not rest but a change of activity. If the mind is exhausted it is a good time to exercise the body. The refreshment is much greater than sitting in a chair and thinking of how tired you are. For doing nothing is one of the most exhausting occupations in the world, and even as a respite for hard labor it is not to be recommended. It is better to turn to something entirely different but equally active. In this way you do not lose the exhilarating sense of motion. You do not slow down. You simply use a different set of faculties. Slowing down is really a bad practice because it takes so much more steam to get under way again.

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I do not mean to convey the impression that one should spend every hour in the day in feverishly seeking violent forms of activity, or that when he is not exerting his mind to the utmost, he should be straining the muscles of his body. There are plenty of recreations which keep the mind pleasantly active without violent effort. Interesting conversation is exercise for the mind. So is reading of the right sort. Listening to good music is exercise for the emotions, a part of us that we do not cultivate any too carefully these days. Seeing good plays and motion pictures is a mild form of intellectual and emotional exercise—not a very robust form of activity perhaps, but still it is something. I have spoken so fully of the great benefits of physical exercise in other articles that it is not necessary to repeat them here.

There are, in short, so many interesting

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forms of activity, of pleasant and stimulating motion of body and mind that there is never any excuse for prolonged idleness. Sometimes we confuse leisure with idleness. Now leisure is a very fine thing. I wish I had more of it. It gives one an opportunity to indulge in more varied kinds of activity.

If you have never tried to account for what you do with the twenty-four hours in each day, you will be amazed to find how much leisure you really have, even if your time seems to be fully occupied. If you spend eight hours in sleep, eight hours in work and two hours in eating which, I suppose, is the average routine of American life, you still have left six mysterious hours of leisure. I say "mysterious" because they are usually hard to account for. They usually slip by without our knowing exactly what we do with them. The way in which

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you employ this long period of leisure every day will have a tremendous bearing upon your health, your happiness and your character. If you spend this time in sheer idleness, you will be cheating yourself out of great profit and satisfaction. For in these six hours a day, if you systematize them, you can work wonders. You can keep yourself in such fine physical condition that the mere condition of being alive is a great joy. You can pursue any hobby or avocation that you like. You can become an expert on any subject under the sun. And you will come back to your daily routine with greater refreshment and enthusiasm than if you spent this leisure in idling and "killing time." "Killing time" is, by the way, a most extraordinary expression, for time is the one thing you can't kill. It moves relentlessly and inevitably on and to get the most out of life you must move with it.

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As I am writing this, I am looking forward to a long period of leisure myself. I have just completed "The Thief of Bagdad," which has taken a year of the most concentrated and uninterrupted work. I shall go to New York and probably to Europe. If this were to be a vacation from all activity, I should contemplate it with the greatest distaste and foreboding. But there is a vast amount of reading I want to do, there will be stimulating contacts with people and other parts of the world and I shall be reaching out for an idea for another picture. (1)

THE END

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